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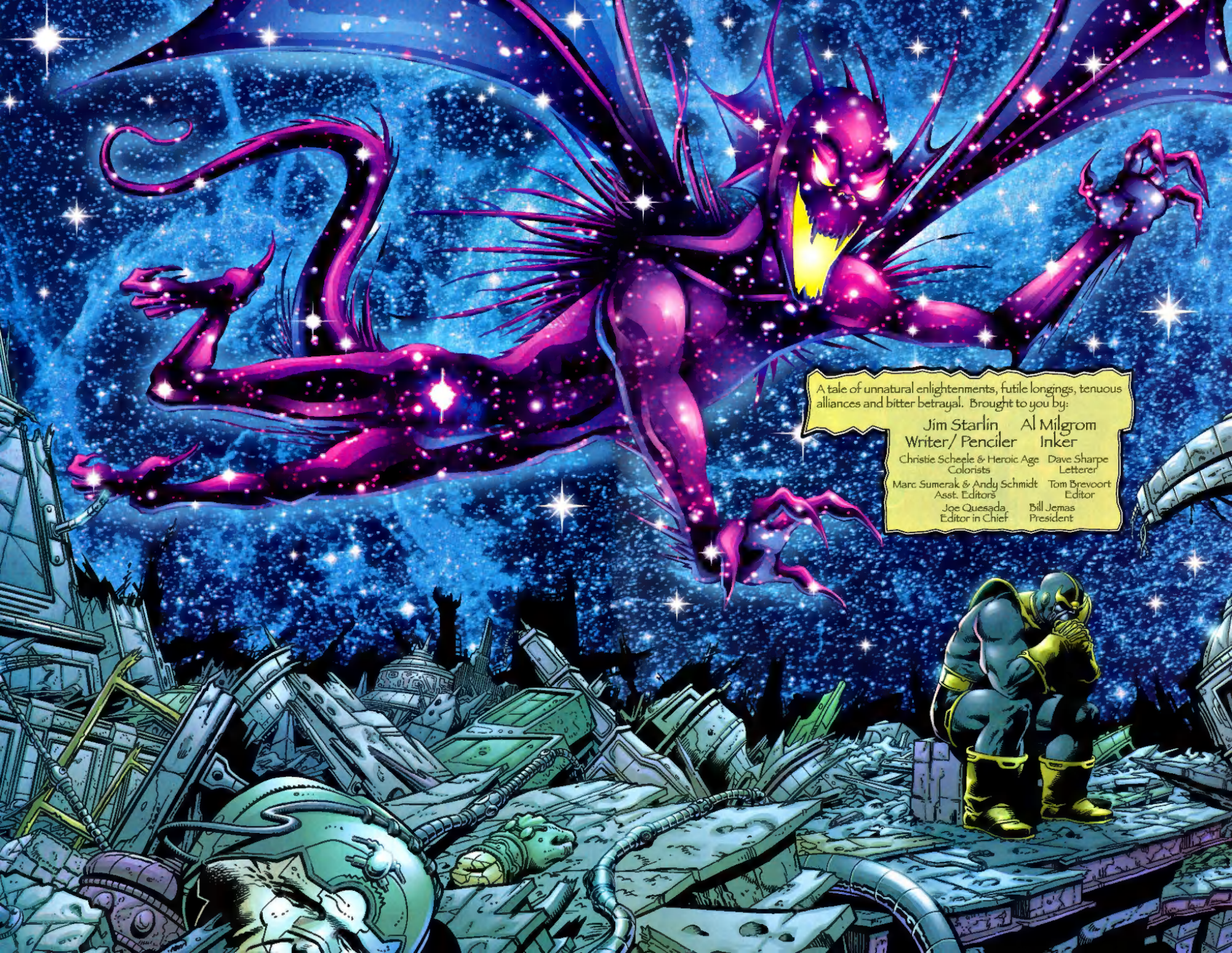
A tale of unnatural enlightenments, futile longings, tenuous alliances and bitter betrayal. Brought to you by:
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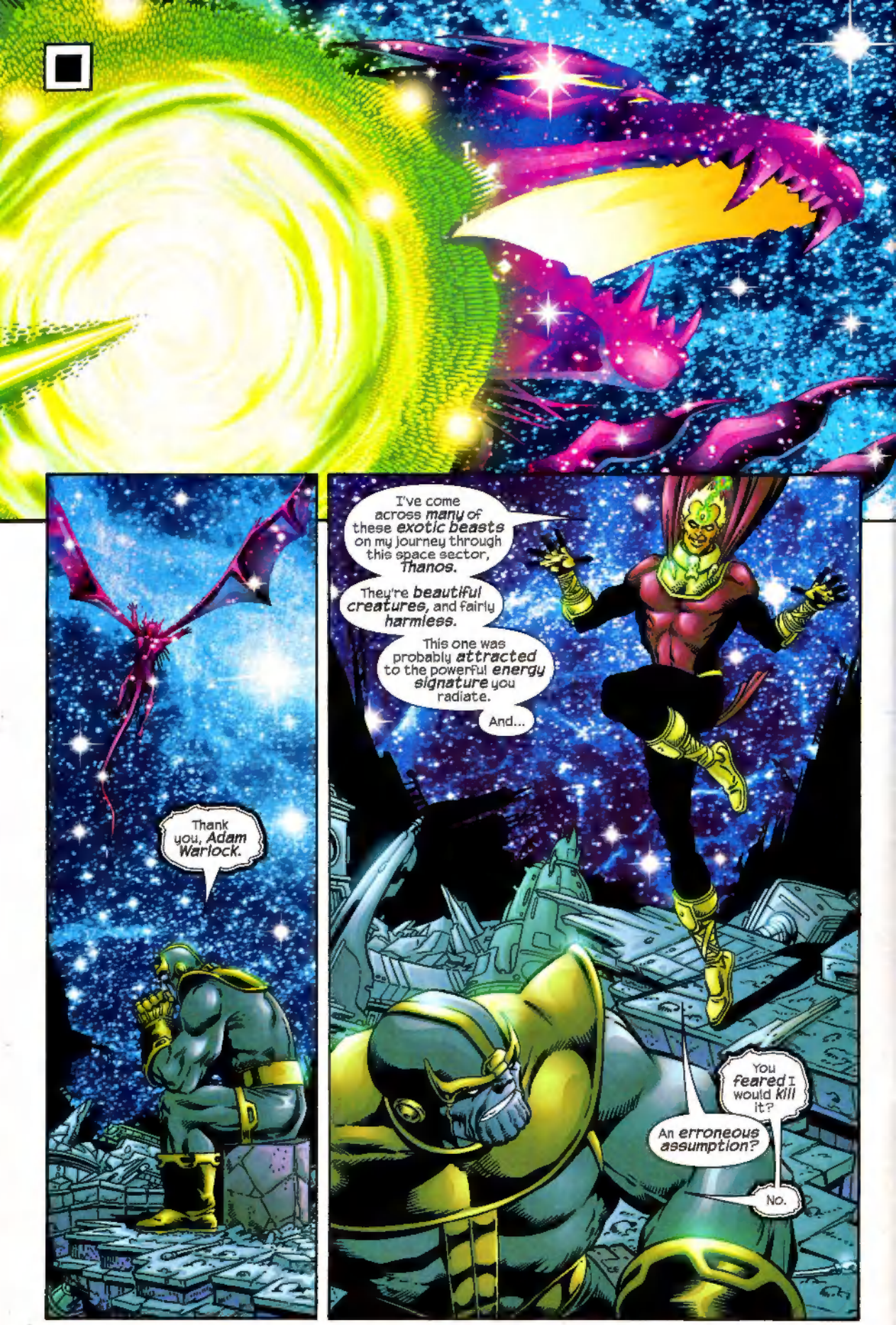
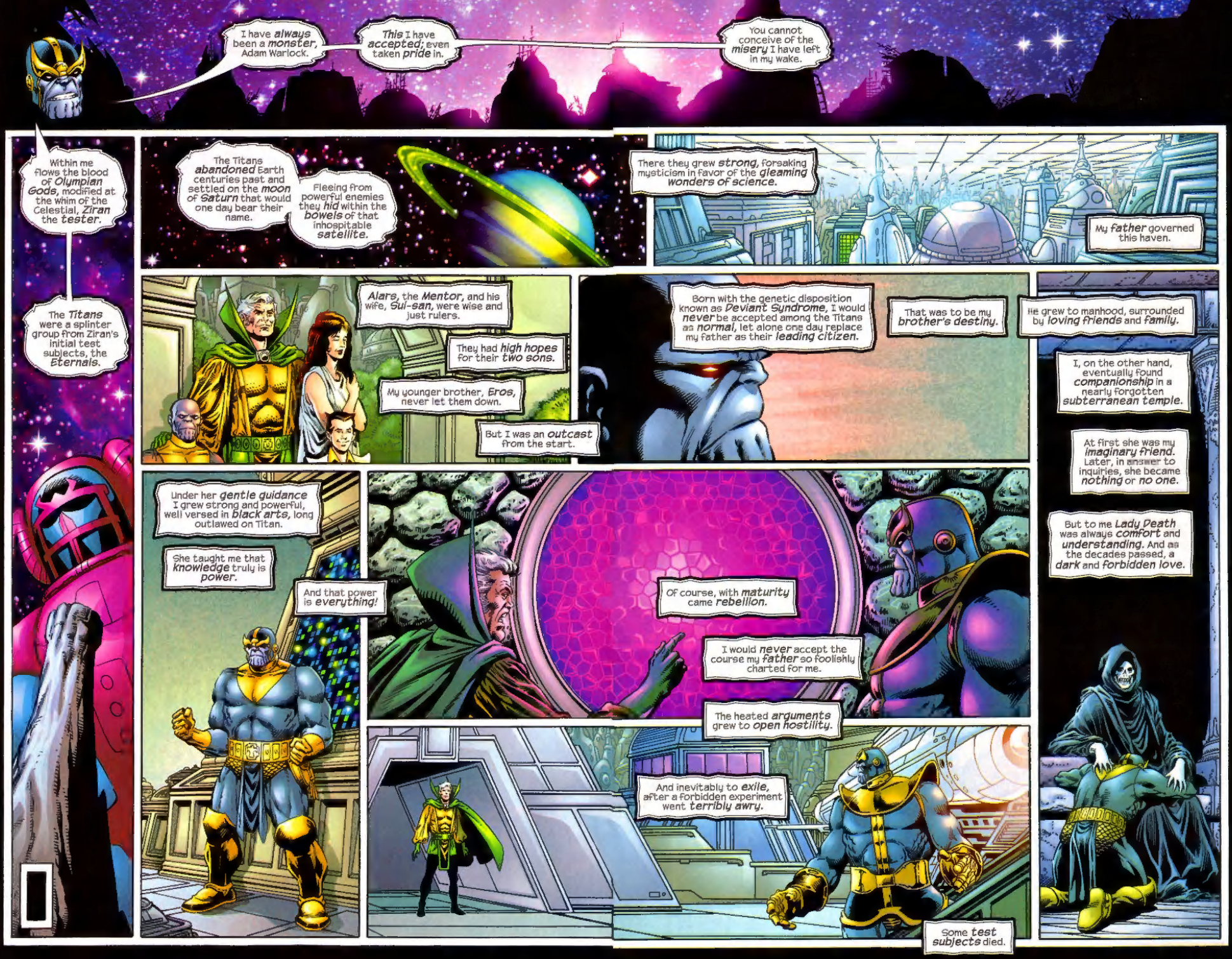
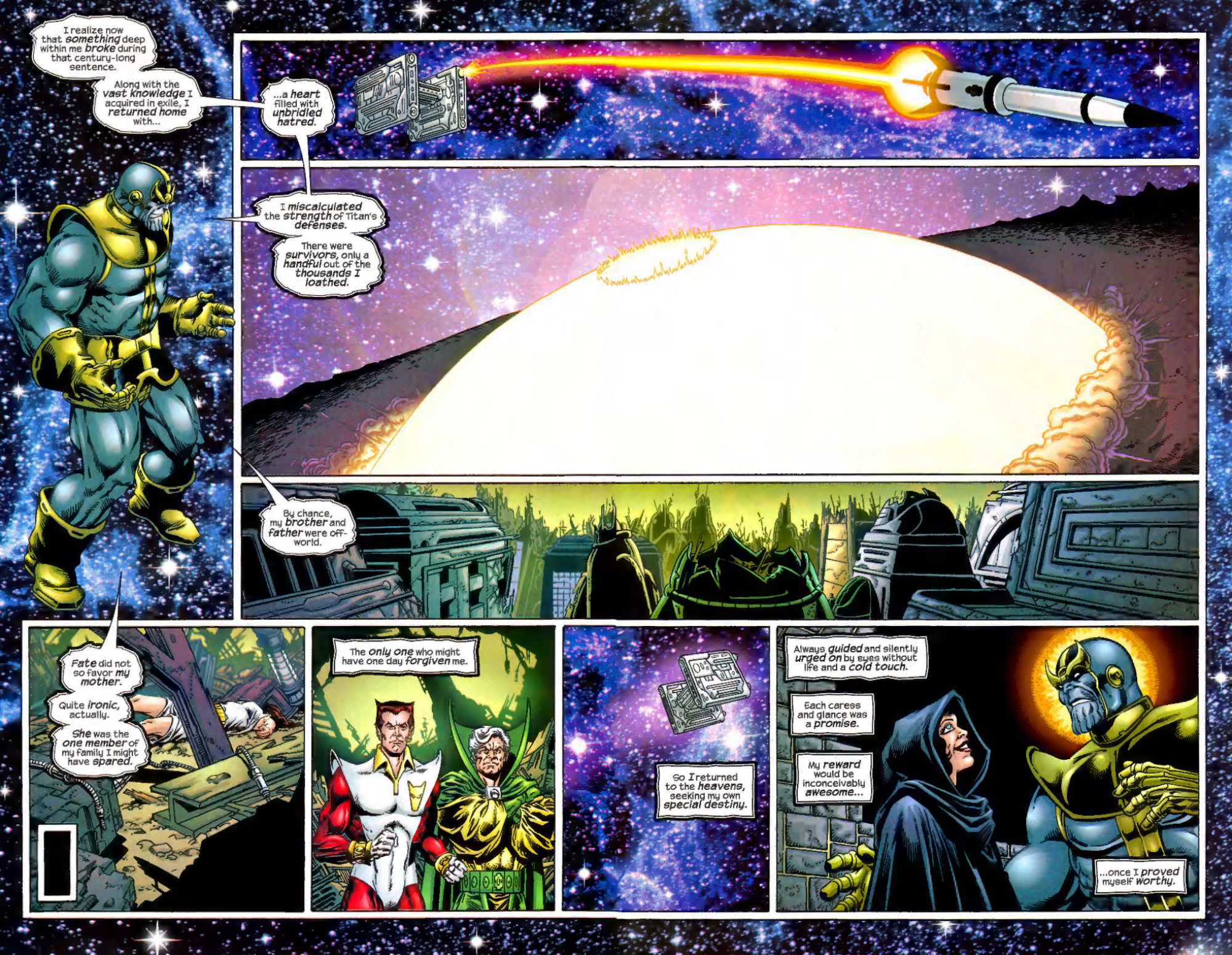
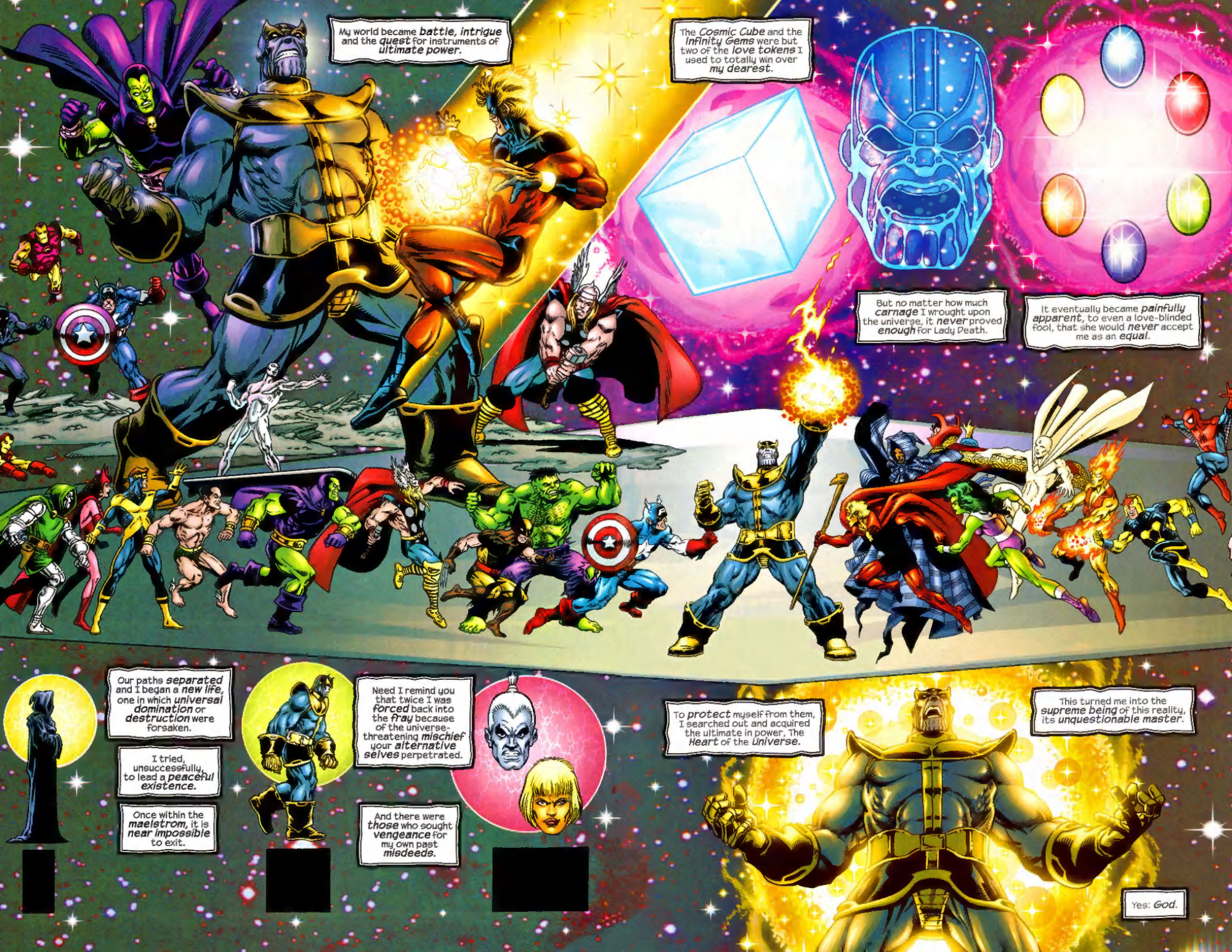

Thank you, Adam Warlock.
I've come across many of these exotic beasts on my journey through this space sector, Thanos.
They're beautiful creatures, and fairly harmless.
This one was probably attracted to the powerful energy signature you radiate.
And...
You feared I would kill it?
An erroneous assumption?
No.

I loathe being interrupted when I am in the depths of contemplation.
Even former allies are not welcomed.
What dark matters do you dwell on, Titan?
That which was and what will be.
Warlock, have you ever killed a world?
Destroyed a reality once, but never a world.
Well, I have. This planet to be precise.
Or rather, to be completely accurate, one of my doppelgangers did, with the aid of monstrous Mangog.
But still the responsibility lies with me.
Behold Rigel-3, once the homeworld of the Rigellian Colonizers.
They had something I desired and so more than five million Rigellians died.
The planet was so badly damaged in the struggle the Rigellians abandoned it and established New Rigel-3.
And you are here because...?


I have always been a monster, Adam Warlock.
This I have accepted; even taken pride in.
You cannot conceive of the misery I have left in my wake.
Within me flows the blood of Olympian Gods, modified at the whim of the Celestial, Ziran the tester.
The Titans were a splinter group from Ziran's initial test subjects, the Eternals.
The Titans abandoned Earth centuries past and settled on the moon of Saturn that would one day bear their name.
Fleeing from powerful enemies they hid within the bowels of that inhospitable satellite.
There they grew strong, forsaking mysticism in favor of the gleaming wonders of science.
My father governed this haven.
Alars, the Mentor, and his wife, Sui-san, were wise and just rulers.
They had high hopes for their two sons.
My younger brother, Eros, never let them down.
But I was an outcast from the start.
Born with the genetic disposition known as Deviant Syndrome, I would never be accepted among the Titans as normal, let alone one day replace my father as their leading citizen.
That was to be my brother's destiny.
He grew to manhood, surrounded by loving friends and family.
I, on the other hand, eventually found companionship in a nearly forgotten subterranean temple.
At first she was my imaginary friend. Later, in answer to inquiries, she became nothing or no one.
But to me Lady Death was always comfort and understanding. And as the decades passed, a dark and forbidden love.
Under her gentle guidance I grew strong and powerful, well versed in black arts, long outlawed on Titan.
She taught me that knowledge truly is power.
And that power is everything!
Of course, with maturity came rebellion.
I would never accept the course my father so foolishly charted for me.
The heated arguments grew to open hostility.
And inevitably to exile, after a forbidden experiment went terribly awry.
Some test subjects died.


I realize now that something deep within me broke during that century-long sentence.
Along with the vast knowledge I acquired in exile, I returned home with...
...a heart filled with unbridled hatred.
I miscalculated the strength of Titan's defenses.
There were survivors, only a handful out of the thousands I loathed.
By chance, my brother and father were off-world.
Fate did not so favor my mother.
Quite ironic, actually.
She was the one member of my family I might have spared.
The only one who might have one day forgiven me.
So I returned to the heavens, seeking my own special destiny.
Always guided and silently urged on by eyes without life and a cold touch.
Each caress and glance was a promise.
My reward would be inconceivably awesome...
...once I proved myself worthy.


My world became battle, intrigue and the quest for instruments of ultimate power.
The Cosmic Cube and the Infinity Gems were but two of the love tokens I used to totally win over my dearest.
But no matter how much carnage I wrought upon the universe, it never proved enough for Lady Death.
It eventually became painfully apparent, to even a love-blinded fool, that she would never accept me as an equal.
Our paths separated and I began a new life, one in which universal domination or destruction were forsaken.
I tried, unsuccessfully, to lead a peaceful existence.
Once within the maelstrom, it is near impossible to exit.
Need I remind you that twice I was forced back into the fray because of the universe-threatening mischief your alternative selves perpetrated.
And there were those who sought vengeance for my own past misdeeds.
To protect myself from them, I searched out and acquired the ultimate in power, The Heart of the Universe.
This turned me into the supreme being of this reality, its unquestionable master.
Yes: God.

But it proved a task totally unsuitable to my temperament.
The first day of my reign ended with me destroying the entire universe in a fit of pique.
To restore it to being meant having to renounce the might I had so desperately striven to gain.
Of course you remember arriving just as I was in the midst of struggling with this dilemma.
But the truth is my decision had been made even before your intrusion.
Better death than to be saddled with mastery of a void.
The mantle of supremacy was tossed aside.
The universe was resurrected, with no memory of its demise.
And I faded to mere memory.
Or so I hoped the universe would assume.
But your Soul Gem must have locked onto my spirit and tracked me here?
Yes. I was always aware of your continued existence, had no idea you were in hiding.

Not hiding as much as reconstituting.
With my waning divine might I restored my shattered armada and granted myself a number of other life-assuring wishes.
Then I came here to contemplate the next act in this play I call my life.
A character change?
Yes. I gained omnipotence and found it wanting, Adam Warlock.
My priorities required reevaluation.
I finally concluded that external validation would never quiet the fires that rage within my soul.
Only by coming to terms with my own personal demons might I ever achieve any type of inner tranquility.
With great effort I have determined exactly what I must do to gain this end.
Thanos now begins a new journey.
Your destination?
As this universe's supreme being I learned to truly appreciate the value of balance.
Eternity has Infinity as Master Chaos has Lord Order.
I have an equilibrium to establish.
But what brought you my way, Warlock?
Believe it or not, I'm not sure.
I was driven from Gamora and Atleza's side to this sector of space by an unexplainable and irresistible urge.
That you are here seems coincidental.
Really?
I have never believed in coincidence.
But I offer you transport, if you head in my direction.
Which is?

New Rigel-3.
Yes, that way draws me.
I thought it *might*.
Then let us see what *coincidence* has in store for us.
Thanos, haven't the Rigellians *suffered enough* at *your hand?*
Why *plague* them further?

You misconstrue my intentions, Warlock.
I wish the Rigellians no harm.
Then just what are you up to, Titan?
There is an old adage that I believe applies here.
Actions speak louder than words.
They also have more credibility.
Wait, and all will be made clear to you.
I will not stand by while innocents are slaughtered.
Be warned.
Threat noted and filed.
Already the Rigellians deploy their outer defenses, justly thinking you've returned to do them ill.
I could easily accomplish that without ever coming into range of their sensors.
That's true. Then...?
A question for you, Warlock:
Yes?
Do you believe in redemption?
Yes.
So do I.

The trick to visiting New Rigel-3 is making your approach so rapid that the Rigellians do not have time to exploit their major defense system.
Did you know they can teleport their entire planet as far away as another galaxy, in order to escape any threat?
They also use this technology to discipline any unruly planets they colonize on a regular basis.
So you see, there is no such thing as an innocent, at least not in this space sector.
You don't seem overly concerned about the Rigellians' assault on your ship.
My dreadnought's defensive screens are more than capable of weathering any Rigellian attack.
And while they are busy, barring the front door...
...we shall teleport in through the back door, right to the Grand Commissioner's royal palace.
A newer, more subtle Thanos of Titan?
Interesting.
But if you would excuse me for a moment.

I am curious to learn...
...whether or not it is only you this Rigellian welcoming committee targets.
Unmanned drones.
Only you, Titan.
Congratulations.
You are clearly a person one does not easily forget.

Or easily kill.
The Rigellians have apparently forgotten that.
I wouldn't take it personally.
Ground troops!
Recall my position on useless slaughter, Titan.
Worry not for the cannon fodder, my conscience.
I have the situation completely under control.

Do you, now?
Even at full strength the ray blasts are nothing to this horror!
Enough!
Surround him!
Then coordinate your volleys!
CEASE FIRE!
I SURRENDER!
Thanos?
Stay out of this, Warlock.
Surrendered?
People of Rigel-3, in the past I have perpetrated heinous crimes against your world and population!
I have come to realize the error of those dreadful acts.
In the long run they gained me nothing.
As a matter of fact they actually cost me dearly.
Each death blackened further an already ebony soul.
But I come not to you this day seeking forgiveness, for my misdeeds are truly unforgivable.
Millions of Rigellians died, and relocating to New Rigel-3 must surely have been a harrowing experience.
A trial that continues to this day, I'd wager.
SO IT BEGINS!

My hope is that I might make easier your lot.
Thanos of Titan has come to make amends!
How may I serve you?
Thanos, perhaps we should have discussed this matter before coming planet-side!
NEXT
REBELLION!

another scan from England's own
HG Wells